

CPC ITEM #4

**Honorable City Planning Commission
Cincinnati, Ohio**

June 16, 2006

SUBJECT: A report and recommendation on the final Burnet Avenue Urban Renewal Plan.

PURPOSE:

To gain approval for the Urban Renewal Plan in accordance with section 725-3 of the Cincinnati Municipal Code (CMC).

BACKGROUND:

Two years ago, the Avondale Community Council and the Uptown Consortium hired private consultants to prepare the Burnet Avenue Revitalization Strategy plan. The draft plan is complete and the Avondale Community Council is requesting that the plan be adopted as an urban renewal plan.

Since the City of Cincinnati was not involved in the preparation of the draft plan, planning staff circulated the draft plan to various city departments for comments. The plan was circulated twice and two meetings were held with city staff from the Department of Transportation and Engineering, Parks, and Waterworks.

The draft Burnet Avenue Urban Renewal Plan was presented and approved by the City Planning Commission on April 7, 2006 with conditions in the addendums incorporated into the final plan. The conditions are listed below:

ADDENDUM 1 – BURNET AVENUE URBAN RENEWAL PLAN

The concept drawings and renderings included in this strategic plan are provided for illustrative purposes only. They attempt to describe a vision for community redevelopment and are not intended to be a literal representation of development proposals or implementation plans. Individual developers will come forth with specific responses to the goals outlined in the strategies to meet the realities of financing, site conditions, property acquisition, and development programs, and these responses may differ from the illustrations. The plan does not represent the final development plan for the area, but provides a design concept and framework for these future development strategies. The plan depicts a vision, not an implementation strategy, so no City funding or other commitments should be implied.

ADDENDUM 2 - BURNET AVENUE URBAN RENEWAL PLAN

Zone Change Recommendations

This draft plan includes various proposed mixed-use new construction involving housing, commercial, office and a parking garage. In order to accommodate these projects and be sure the appropriate zoning is in place, some zone changes will be necessary.

Existing Zoning

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Currently, the existing zoning within the proposed urban renewal area is predominantly RMX (Residential Mixed) and RM 1.2 (Multi-family) along the eastern, southern and western edges of the area. In the center of the area along Burnet Avenue, both sides of the street have the zoning designation of CN-M (Commercial Neighborhood Mixed). (See the attached map)

Proposed Zoning

Within the urban renewal area on the following zone changes are recommended:

- ❑ The majority of the RMX east of Burnet Avenue, along Harvey Avenue, change to RM 1.2
- ❑ The CN-M along Burnet Avenue, from Erkenbrecher to Forest Avenues, change to CC-M (Commercial Community-Mixed)
- ❑ The CN-M in the northern portion along Rockdale Avenue change to RM 1.2
- ❑ The RMX along both sides of Jay Street change to CC-M
- ❑ The RMX at the corner of Burnet & Erkenbrecher change to IR (Institutional – Residential)

Alternately, a PD designation of all or a portion of the entire project area would facilitate development of this area.

URBAN RENEWAL AREA:

The proposed urban renewal area is situated in the middle of the Avondale statistical neighborhood. The proposed study area is bounded approximately by Forest Avenue to the north; Harvey Avenue to the east; Erkenbrecher Avenue to the south; and Wilson to the west, as shown on the attached map.

The City Planning Commission approved the Urban Renewal Plan study boundary on November 4, 2005.

The Office of Architecture and Urban Design in the City's Department of Transportation and Engineering conducted an eligibility study (blight study) for the area in accordance with Chapter 725 CMC. The study concludes that the number, degree, and distribution of factors documented in the report warrant the designation of the area along Burnet Avenue bounded by Forest, Harvey, Erkenbrecher and Wilson Avenues as a "Blighted Area" pursuant to Chapter 725 of the CMC. A summary of this study is included in the draft plan document.

PLAN OVERVIEW:

The draft plan was developed out of a community based planning process where the Burnett Avenue Revitalization Team (BART) served as the steering committee and advisors for the planning process. Early in the process, the consultant team worked with BART to identify key stakeholders such as

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major institutions, neighborhood leaders, local developers, residents, homeowners, local businesses and others. Workshops and a community charette were held for residents, business owners and stakeholders during the planning process. A series of meetings between the consultant and BART were held over a period of two years. Overall the revitalization strategy addresses the desire for new retail, new infill housing, new office space, new public spaces, additional parking and the need to address safety concerns. Some of the preliminary recommendations are as follows:

1. To make Burnet Avenue a unique urban place with an active and safe street life, including a range of new retailing opportunities where people will choose to live and work,
2. Provide new housing choices for residents,
3. Target programs for home improvement and home ownership within the neighborhood,
4. Seek a new unique identity that will enable Burnet Avenue to become known for special retailing experiences unlike those of many of its nearby competitors,
5. Establish a low income tax credit and/or a new markets tax credit fund(s),
6. Redevelop the site between Hickory and Rockdale with mixed-income replacement housing,
7. Develop a feasibility study for re-use of the building at the SW corner of Rockdale and Burnet,
8. Develop a large mixed-use development, which includes housing, parking and retail along Burnet Avenue,
9. Undertake a marketing study for new housing.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT:

On January 4, 2006, City staff held a public informational meeting in Avondale and invited all the property owners within the Burnet Avenue Urban Renewal study boundary and the Avondale Community Council. Uptown Consortium made a presentation of the plan and then questions and comments were taken. There was no one in opposition to the plan in attendance.

COORDINATED CITY PLAN:

The Burnet Avenue Urban Renewal Plan conforms to the following goals and policies of the Coordinated City Plan, Volume 2: Strategies for Comprehensive Land Use, 1980:

1. Promote economic development and stabilize communities by planning for the retention, revitalization and in some cases the expansion of commercial land uses.
2. Promote the stability of communities by planning for new residential land use as well as for the retention and rehabilitation of existing residential land uses.

IMPLEMENTATION:

The implementation plan is divided into five phases listed below:

- Phase 1 includes the area along Burnet bounded by Erkenbrecher, Harvey, Northern and Burnet.
- Phase 2 includes the area along Burnet bounded by Northern, Harvey, Rockdale and Burnet.
- Phase 3 includes the area along Burnet bounded by Rockdale, Harvey, Forest and Burnet.
- Phase 4 includes the area along the east side of Wilson between Northern and Rockdale.
- Phase 5 includes the remaining residential areas along Hearne, Northern, Erkenbrecher, Rockdale and Forest.

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These five phases will be implemented over several years.

RECOMMENDATION:

The staff of the Department of Community Development and Planning recommends that City Planning Commission take the following action:

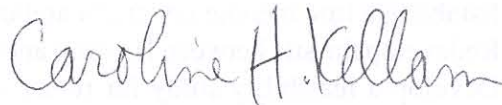
Approve and adopt the Final Burnet Avenue Urban Renewal Plan, dated April 2006, as the City's planning guide for properties within the Burnet Avenue Urban Renewal Plan boundaries and as the City's Urban Renewal Plan for elimination of blight within the Burnet Avenue Urban Renewal Plan boundaries.

APPROVED:



Margaret A. Wuerstle, AICP
Chief Planner

Respectfully submitted,



Caroline Hardy Kellam
Senior City Planner

Attachments

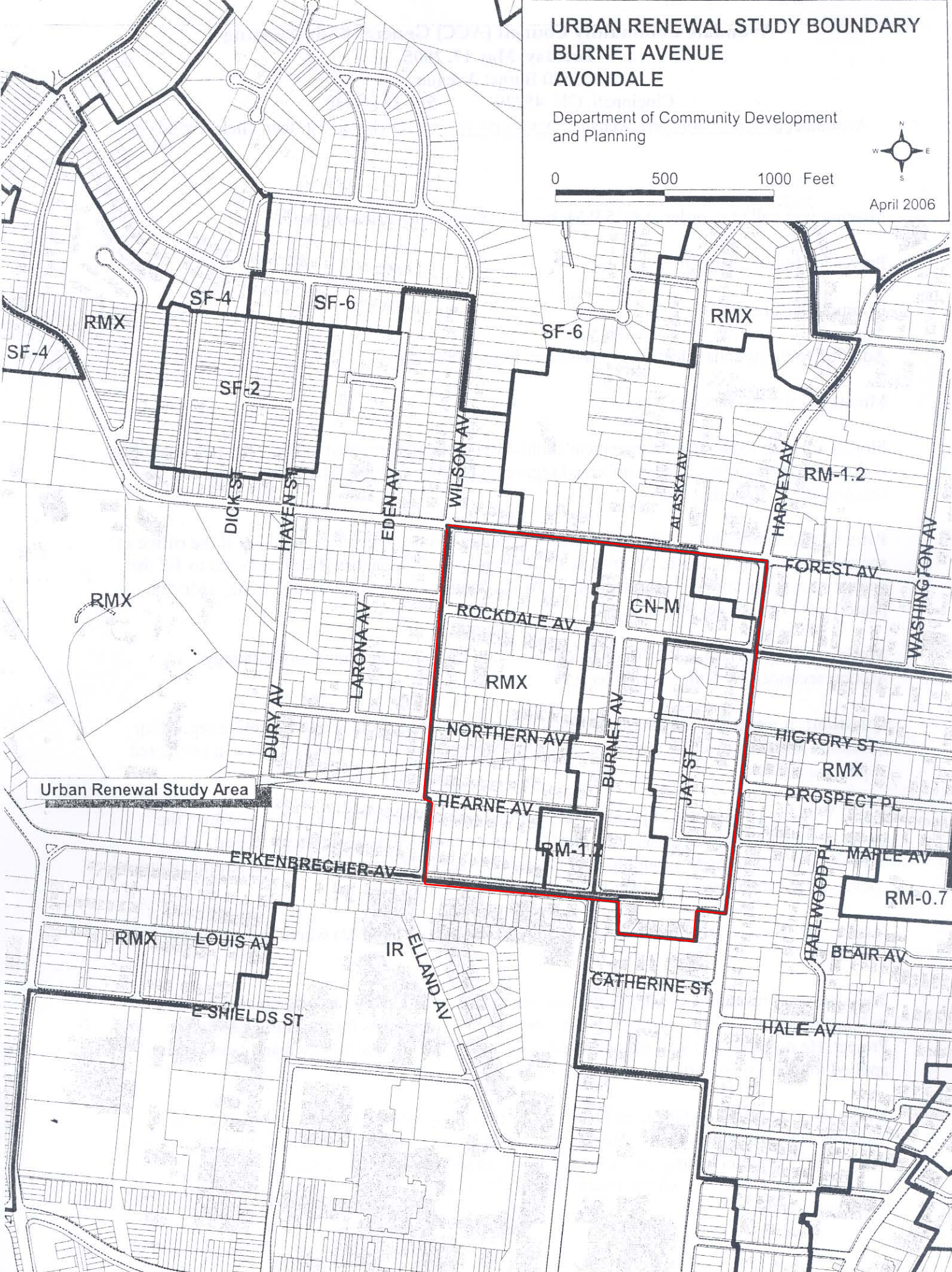
URBAN RENEWAL STUDY BOUNDARY
BURNET AVENUE
AVONDALE

Department of Community Development
and Planning

0 500 1000 Feet



April 2006



Urban Renewal Study Area

Avondale Community Council (ACC) General Body Meeting

Tuesday, May 17, 2005

3520 Burnet Avenue

Cincinnati, OH 45229 513-281-4430

Avondalecouncil5@aol.com website: www.cddcinc.org, click current, then click Avondale)

Meeting was called to order at 6:35 P.M. by ACC President Patricia Milton.

Prayer led by Rev. Brown.

Quorum was present.

Addition to the agenda: election of Cassandra Rice as Secretary.

Minutes of the last meeting were read.

Florence Parker made an announcement (Public Evolvment Specialist at OKI) her responsibility is that all communities are kept informed regarding Uptown transportation study. She can be reached at 621-6300 Ext. 103.

Patricia Milton introduced Cassandra Rice. Cassandra has been recommended to fill the office of secretary by the ACC board. Motion by Gayle Renfro that Cassandra Rice be elected to fill the vacancy for the position of secretary of the ACC. Motion second by Derrick Smith. Motion passed. VOTE: 27 yes 0 against

Motion by Gayle Harden Renfro to accept the Burnett Avenue Revitalization Strategy
Motion seconded by Fulton Jefferson Jr.

Question: It was asked was there anyone that was not present from the last meeting regarding questions from last meeting regarding (BART). Motion tabled to review information presented at previous meeting.

Curtis Wells went over his 14 points of a letter that was submitted to the ACC regarding the project. He indicated there was not a minority report indicated in the Strategy Report. He indicated he was going to submit to City Council. Patricia noted that she had had several hours of conversation with Curtis to answer his questions.

Jerry Pryor asked (1) how much the Burnet project will cost. And (2) where is the money coming from?

Tony Brown, President/CEO, Uptown Consortium indicated Uptown has designated funds (\$50 million) which will be leveraged and combined with city resources for the Burnet Avenue Project. He noted project will be in 5 phases; also talked about new money market tax credits applied for and Empowerment Zone tax credits.

Jerry asks to look at Revitalization Plan page 17 regarding parking #9 indicating replacing residents to move employees in. He recommends members to vote no and have them go back to the drawing board indicating monies are available at the Empowerment Zone. Jim King indicated some properties will be taken. The goal is to find a way to support the needs of the community and institutions.